

Impact of telecommunication technologies on the middle class formation

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Abstract

© Published under licence by IOP Publishing Ltd. The article is devoted to the study of the impact of the information economy on the formation of the middle class. The paper identifies factors contributing to the increase in the share of the middle class in the transition to the information economy. The positive synergetic influence of telecommunication technologies on the formation of the middle class is considered through a possibility of using virtual spaces for labor and educational activities, a possibility of obtaining high returns in the form of dividends on intellectual capital, a qualitative change in the structure of needs, an access to new types of information services, etc. Authors develop a complex model of research of the middle class in the information economy, differing from those available using an expanded list of criteria. In addition to such widely used criteria as income level, level of education and self-identification, the criterion degree of involvement in the information society was introduced. The study substantiates that the transition to the information economy made an access to information and communication technologies one of the most significant criteria for social differentiation of society. On the basis of the model, an econometric estimate of the middle class has been carried out, which makes it possible to reveal the share of the middle class in modern society, dynamics of its development, as well as multicollinearity between spending on education, the Gini coefficient, access to information and telecommunication technologies and the size of the middle class.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/936/1/012093>

Keywords

information economy, information society, middle class, social stratification

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